

Classes of Toxic Plants

by George Flentke, WHRS Chapter Manager Autumn 2012

Not all species or varieties of these plants have the same levels of toxins. Classification is based on the most dangerous plant of that species or variety.

An example is the avocado. Avocados are of several varieties, only one of which contains toxins at a level dangerous to species other than humans. Hybridization of the varieties for agricultural reasons has made it difficult to determine if the toxic variety is part of a hybrid species. Thus, all avocados are assumed to be problematic.

Many plants are safe if treated to destroy toxins. Fruit trees are all listed as Class 1 toxins, but if the bark and branches are totally dried out, the toxins are destroyed. The sticks make wonderful rabbit chew toys. Remember if the sticks have any green in the bark (scrape through with a fingernail), then they are not dried. The seeds of all stone fruits (those with pits), apples, and pears should be treated as Class 1 toxins even if dried.

Class 1: Universal species toxins. These are usually systemic toxins or local effect toxins of sufficient intensity to cause systemic problems. In general, these plants should not be part of your household or they should be well- protected from rabbits.

Class 2: Local toxins: Allergens, dermal sensitivity toxins, or systemic toxins of lesser strengths. Since rabbits inevitably chew items, these toxins could be more of a problem than the current literature indicates. These plants should be viewed with caution.

Class 3: Low risk plants. Low-level toxins or toxins that herbivores, such as rabbits, routinely handle better than non-herbivore species. This class also contains plants that have historically been considered quite toxic, but recently whose toxicity is being reevaluated as nontoxic or low toxicity.

If you suspect any of your pets is experiencing poisoning, call your vet. Bring in the whole suspected plant, any vomit, or chewed parts of plant. Check all plants to make sure that chewing is confined only to that suspected plant.



Class 1: Call your vet immediately or go to an emergency clinic immediately.

Class 2: Call your vet for consultation on whether an appointment is warranted.

Class 3: Watch rabbit carefully for any signs of poisoning or ill health. Call your vet if you feel it is warranted.

CLASS 1 - Do NOT expose rabbits to these plants.

Anenome Castor Bean Flypoison

Angel's Trumpet Chalice Vine Fool's Parsley

Apple Cherry Laurel Foxglove

Apricot Chinese bellflower Fruit pits

Arrowgrass Chinese Lantern Glory Lilly

Autumn Crocus Chokecherry Gold Dieffenbachia

Avocado Christmas Berry Goldenchain
Azalea Christmas Rose Goldenrain
Baby Wood Rose Cocklebur Greasewood
Balsam Apple Coytillo Halogeton

Balsam Pear Crowpoison Hawaiian Baby Wood Rose

Baneberry (white, red, Daffodil Hellebore black) Daphne Henbane Beafsteak plant Day-Blooming Jessamine Horse Nettle Bittersweet Deadly Nightshade Indian Hemp Bitterweed Death Camas Indian tobacco

Black Cherry Delphinium Indigo
Black Nightshade Devil's Tomato Inkberry

Bladderpod Dieffenbachia Inkweed/Drymary

Bloodroot Doll's eyes Jasimine

Blue Gum Dumbcane Jequirity Beans
Bluebonnet Elderberry Jerusalem Cherry

Boxwood English Ivy Jessamine

Buddhist Pine English Laurel Jimmy Fern/Cloak Fern
Bunchberry Eucalyptus Jimson Weed/Thorn Apple

Buttercup/Ranuncula European Nightshade Jonquil
Butterfly Weed Exotica perfection Karela
Calico bush/Moutain Laurel False parsley Laburnum
California Holly False Wild grape Lambkill
Carolina jasmine Flowering maple Larkspur



LeucaenaPeriwinkleSpider Climbing LillyLigustrumPeyoteSpotted Dumb Cane

Lillies Pheasant's Eye Squill
Lily-of-the-Valley Plum Tree Stinkweed

Lobelia Poison Ash Swamp Laurel/ Bog Laurel
Lupines Poison Hemlock Sweetheart Ivy

Mandrake Poison Ivy Tansy
May Apple Poison Nut Toadstools
Meadow saffron Poison Oak Tomato
Mescal Poison Sumac Toyon

Milk Vetch Poke salad Trumpet Flower
Milkweed Pokeweed Trumpet Plant
Molds in Hay Poppy Tullidora

Monkshood Potato Variable Dieffenbachia

Precatory bean Moonflower Water Hemlock Prickly poppy Moonseed Water Parsnip Privet Hedge Wild Carrot Morning Glory Purple Mint Wild cucumber Mother-in-Law Plant Red Sage Mountain Laurel Wild Jessamine Rhododendron Wild mushrooms Mushrooms

Needlepoint Ivy
Ripple Ivy
Wild Peas
Nutmeg
Rosary pea
Windflower
Oleander
Rosebay
Wolfsbane
Orange Sneezeweed
Rose-bay
Wood-rose
Paradise Plant
Scilla
Yellow jasmine

Peach Tree Sheep Laurel Yew

Pear Tree Silverleaf nightshade

Perill mint Sneezeweed



CLASS 2: May cause allergic reaction in rabbits. Be cautious.

African Blue Lilly Corn Plant Green gold Nephthysis

Agapanthus Cow Parsnip Guajillo Alder Buckthorn Hogweed Cowslip Amaryllis Crinum Lily Hogwort American Hellebore Croton Horsebrush Crown of Thorns Horsetail Reed Anthurium Arrowhead vine Crown Vetch Hunter's robe Cut-leaf Philodendron Barberry Hyacinth Bear Grass Cycads Hydrangea Begonia (sand) Cyclamen Indian Poke Bird of Paradise Dasheen Indian Tobacco

Bleeding Heart Dessert Tobacco Inkberry
Blue Gum Devil's Ivy Iris

Bracken Fern Dianthus Jack-in-the-Pulpit
Buckeye/Horse Chestnut Dracaena palm/Ribbon Plant Japanese Pagoda Tree

Buckthorn Dutchman's Breeches Locoweed
Burning Bush Dutchman's Pipe Lucky Bamboo

Cactus Elephant Ear Madagascar Dragon Tree/
Caladium Emerald Feather Red-Margined

Calendula/Pot Marigold Emerald Fern Dracaena
Calla Lilly Eucalyptus Marble Queen
Candelabra Cactus Euonymus Marijuana
Cardinal Flower Everlasting Pea Marsh Marigold
Carnations Eyebane Meadow Pea

Cassine False Hellebore Mesquite
Century Plant False Sago Palm Mexican Breadfruit

Ceriman/Split-Leaf Fern Palms Miniature Croton
Philodendron/ Fiddleneck Mistletoe

Mexican Breadfruit Fireweed Nephthytis/Chinese
Chinaberry Tree Fishtail Palm Evergreen

Chinese Inkberry Florida Beauty Night Jessamine

ClematisFruit Salad PlantOak TreeClimbing BittersweetGeranium (California)Panda

Coffee Bean/ Senna BeanGladiolaPaper-flowersCoral Berry/SnowberryGold Dust DracaenaPartridge BreastCordatum/ PhilodendronGolden PothosPeace Lilly

Corn Cockle Green Cestrum Pencil Tree



Saddle leaf Philodendron

Peony Sago Palm Tallow, Chinese/Japanese

Persian VioletSand BegoniaTansyPhilodendronSatin PothosTaraPigweedScheffleraTaro VinePingue/Colorado RubberScindapusTobacco

Weed Shamrock Plant/Oxalis Tree Philodendron

Plumosa Fern Silver Pothos Tulip

Poinciana Skunk Cabbage Umbrella plant

Pot Mum/Spider MumSnow-on-the-mountainVariegated PhilodendronPothosSolomon's SealVariegated Rubber Plant

Prickly copper-weed Spathe Flower Walnut
Pride of Barbados Split Leaf Philodendron Warneckei Dracaena
Rabbitbrush Star of Bethlehem White Snakeroot

Rayless goldenrod Strawberry Bush Wild Tobacco
Red princess Striped Dracaena Wisteria
Rhubarb Sweet Flag Yaupon Holly

Swiss Cheese Plant

Sacahuista Sweet Pea



CLASS 3: Low Level Toxins.

Acacia Indian Laurel

African Rue Indian Rubber plant

Aloe Vera Johnson Grass

Alsike Clover Juniper
Apple Leaf Croton Kafir

Asparagus Fern Klamath Weed
Baccharis Lechiquilla

Betel Nut Palm Maiden Hair Tree

Black Locust Majesty

Black Root/Black Snakeroot Medicine Plant

Black Walnut Milo

Blue Cohosh Poinsettia
Boston Ivy Primrose

Broomweed Purple Sesbane
Calamondin Orange Tree Pyracantha
Cineraria/Groundsel Rattlebox
Creeping Charlie (not Rattleweed

houseplant) Red Emerald
Cuban Laurel Silverling
Daisy Snakeweed
Emerald Duke Sorghum

Fiddle-leaf Fig Sprengeri Fern (asparagus)

Firecracker St. Johns Wort
Firethorn String of Beads
Fireweed String of Pearls
Four O'clock Sudan grass
Gentians True Aloe

German Ivy Turpentine Plant
Gill over the Ground Virginia Creeper
Ginko Weeping Fig

Goatweed Wild Cucumber/Balsam

Ground Ivy Apple
Groundsel Wild Pea
Heart Ivy Woodbine

Heartleaf Yerba-de-pasmo

Holly Tree/Bush Horse-Head